

WASHINGTON POST
AND TIMES HERALD

MAR 29 1964

STATINTL

Avoid East Germany, Johnson Tells Pilots

By Richard L. Lyons
Staff Reporter

AUSTIN, Tex., March 28 — President Johnson held a news conference at his ranch today and dealt with subjects ranging from the need to take a look at food prices to the need for military planes to keep on course over East Germany.

The President said he had given instructions to the Defense Department "and followed through very, very vigorously" on the necessity for pilots to "observe the corridor assigned to American planes flying over East Germany."

To Ask Food Study

His purpose was to prevent another incident such as the shooting down of an RB66 reconnaissance bomber earlier this month. The United States said the plane had strayed off course during a training flight and denied Soviet charges that it was on a spy mission. There have been similar incidents earlier.

Mr. Johnson said he will ask Congress to establish a bipartisan commission to "study changes taking place in the American food industry." He said the commission should look into such questions as whether the food producer receives a fair share and whether the housewife pays too much.

"For some commodities the producer is getting 25 per cent less and the housewife is paying 25 per cent more" than a short time ago, he said. Congress has been conducting hearings on food prices.

The President said "I do not share the view" expressed by Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) in his speech Wednesday criticizing American policy on Cuba, Panama and Viet-Nam.

Dined With Fulbright

"We respect his opinion, but in this case we do not agree with him," said the President.

Mr. Johnson said he had dinner with Fulbright last Sunday and that they discussed Viet-Nam.

"We did not discuss Cuba and Panama . . . I am sorry we didn't go into some detail in connection with our respective viewpoints. Perhaps the situation could have been cleared up some."

Fulbright had urged that the Nation re-examine its traditional policies in light of new conditions. He proposed accepting Cuban communism as a fact as long as it is kept on the island, and suggested that the Panama treaty might well be changed.

The President announced appointment of more women to high-level Federal jobs—including the first woman to serve on the Atomic Energy Commission. Since the first of the year, he said, 89 women have been appointed to positions paying more than \$10,000 a year, and 389 others already in Government service have been promoted to that level.

In connection with his war on poverty, the President said he plans to visit several areas of poverty, including some large industrial centers.

He said he is drafting an executive order creating an advisory board of senior Government officials to "evaluate" and advise him on development of a supersonic transport plane.

Evaluation Board

"We believe the technical challenge is manageable," said the President. "The main problem lies in the financial area." The big question is how much of the billion-dollar development cost should be borne by private industry.

Serving on the board will be Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara; Najeeb Halaby, head of the Federal Aviation Agency; Eugene Black, chairman of a committee that made a previous

study; Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon; John McCone, director of the Central Intelligence Agency; Secretary of Commerce Luther Hodges; and James Webb, head of the space program.

Mr. Johnson also announced appointment of the three presidential members of a commission created by Congress to study the political future of Puerto Rico — whether it should be statehood, independence or an improved commonwealth status.

James H. Rowe Jr., Washington lawyer and an adviser both to Mr. Johnson and Franklin D. Roosevelt, was named chairman. Others named were Patricia Roberts Harris, who holds a Ph.D. from George Washington University and a Phi Beta Kappa key from Howard University; and Brewster Denny, director of the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington.

The President ducked questions on what he thought of McNamara as a vice presidential possibility, and on when he might announce his own candidacy for election.

On the Vice Presidency, Mr. Johnson said he expected that the presidential nominee would make a recommendation to the Democratic convention in August "and I am sure they will make a wise selection."

As for his own plans, "we will come to that when Congress goes home."

The President invited newsmen out to the ranch, 65 miles west of Austin, in mid afternoon for beer and pretzels and an informal conference in his paneled office. He read off the lists of appointments and patiently spelled names for reporters who missed them.